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**CGA Energy and Technology Committee  
Public Hearing – February 10, 2015**

**SUPPORT FOR**

**SB 572 AAC Gigabit Internet Access**

**Submitted by Pua Ford, Media Issues Specialist  
League of Women Voters of Connecticut**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut appreciates the opportunity today to offer comment on proposed Senate Bill 572.

*The League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports making high speed Internet access available to all Connecticut residents, without charge, through schools, libraries, and other secure public buildings. High speed affordable Internet access is an essential service that should be readily available to all Connecticut residents and businesses. State and local government policies should support broadband, wireless, and other means of high speed Internet deployment throughout the state.*

LWVCT strongly supports the concept of this bill, which calls for the state to facilitate the rapid development of gigabit Internet infrastructure in municipalities across the state. I was able to attend several meetings of the Broadband Internet Coordinating Council in 2009-11 while they existed. The council heard from a variety of people about the needs of municipalities to serve their citizens, about the needs of the state library system, about the lesser known services available to businesses, about what businesses need to enter a public-private partnership and more.

(<http://www.ct.gov/cblcc/cwp/view.asp?a=3592&q=428414>)

A CT-N recording of a conference sponsored by the Office of Consumer Counsel, held on April 11, 2014, is still available online. "Moving toward a Gigabit State" runs well over 3.5 hours. I reviewed the last 1.5 hours, with a panel of representatives from internet service providers considering "options and barriers to availability" of broadband services. (<http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=10133>) A January 22, 2015 press release on the OCC website announces responses to their RFQ for building the network, indicating that ideas heard in the April conference had been incorporated. Smaller municipalities than Stamford, New Haven, and West Hartford—who are mentioned in the press release—also are looking forward to making the connection to a faster network. ([http://www.ct.gov/occ/lib/occ/012215\\_gig\\_press\\_release.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/occ/lib/occ/012215_gig_press_release.pdf))

LWVCT adopted the above position in 2008 after a study conducted in 2006-07. We qualified the language to "high-speed" instead of "broadband" internet to be more inclusive, to get the best quality of internet to the public that we could imagine at the time. "Gigabit" is the most desired quality now. In another eight years it might be something more. When that happens we hope we already will have a good network ready to be adapted and upgraded.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer our testimony to the Committee today.